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RL:0361

SB 624, SD 2 RELATING TO DISCLOSURES OF MONTHLY FISH CATCHES

**Statement for
House Committee on
Ocean and Marine Resources
Public Hearing, 22 March 1979**

**By
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SB 624, SD 2 would amend HRS 189-3, a section requiring monthly fish catch reports from commercial fishermen. This statement on the bill does not reflect an institutional position of the University.

With the amendment proposed in the original version of SB 624 and in a companion bill, HB 728, the monthly catch reports would not be considered matters of public record, but the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) would be authorized to compile and make available for public inspection certain summaries from them.

As we pointed out at a hearing of your committee on 1 March, (Env. Ctr. statement RL:0349) there were two problems with the original version.

- 1) The DLNR would merely have been authorized, and not mandated to prepare the summaries and make them available.
- 2) The withholding of monthly catch reports from the public applied not merely to the reports concerning fish but also to those concerning coral.

The result would have been that the public would have had no means of checking whether fishermen and coral harvesters were adhering to applicable regulations, and no one could add to or challenge the DLNR estimates of sustainable yields on the basis of the actual harvests and then results.

The objectionable features of the original versions of the bills have been removed in SB 642, SD 2. In this version the DLNR would be mandated to prepare summaries of those catch reports that are not in the public record and make the summaries available to the public, and the coral harvest reports would remain part of the public record.

We see no reason why the bill should not be passed in this form.